

IV. REMARKS

In the office action, request was made for insertion of headings, the headings being provided by this amendment. Objection was made to claim 4 with a request for the changing of spelling of the word "signalling" to -- signaling -- . This spelling change and corresponding spelling changes in other ones of the claims are made by this amendment.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as being indefinite for reasons set forth in the office action. Claim 4 has been amended to correct the indefinite passage.

Claims 1-3 and 5-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Osawa (GB 2 275 800 A) for reasons set forth in the office action. Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Osawa in view of Darbee (US 6,130,726), and claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Osawa for reasons set forth in the office action.

Claim 1 has been amended to emphasize the distinction between the invention and the teaching of the cited art. The amendment to claim 1 is believed to overcome the foregoing rejections, thereby to obtain allowable subject matter in the claims in view of the following argument.

1. As described in detail in the introductory portion of the specification, the present invention relates to a method for controlling a system, in particular, an electronic system comprising a least one, but preferably two or more application devices that can be controlled by a user using only one common controlling device.

According to claim 1, a control information input, such as control instructions including a control command and/or control parameters, is interpreted in accordance with available application devices of the electronic system. In accordance with the result of the interpretation of the control information, the corresponding application device is controlled.

If, for example, the electronic system includes a radio apparatus as an application device, the user may input the name of a radio station, such as "AFN" or -as mentioned in the first complete paragraph on page 2 of the specification- "WDR2" (German radio station). Then, the input of the name of a radio station is interpreted in such a way that the system recognizes that the information input by the user is the name of a radio station, and that the user wishes to listen to this radio station. Therefore, according to this interpretation, a turn-on command (if necessary) and a radio station selection command are supplied to the radio apparatus for switching it on (if necessary) and to select the desired radio station.

Thus, as mentioned on page 2 of the specification, the inventive method for controlling a system makes it possible that a user can input control information or instructions completely independently from a permanently predetermined menu structure. Thus, it is not necessary for the user to select first a certain application device to be controlled, and then to select the desired control commands from a menu as it is usual in the prior art.

2 . In contrast, Osawa teaches a remote control system for controlling a plurality of devices that is completely different

from the present invention because the Osawa system uses a menu structure presented to a user for controlling a plurality of audio/video devices.

In particular, the known Osawa system comprises a remote controller 9, a master controller 1, including a signal controlling section 10 and a remote controller control section 11, a plurality of audio/video devices 2 to 6 connected to the master controller 1, and output means 7, 8 including a video monitor and a loud speaker for presenting a video/audio program.

As explained in detail in connection with Figures 3a and 3b of Osawa, upon actuating a power switch 99a of the remote controller 9, a power-on command and an identification data demand signal are transmitted to the master controller 1 (pages 8 to page 9, line 3). Thereupon, the main source of the master controller 1 and the sources of the audio/video devices are turned on (page 9, lines 3 to 7).

A connection detecting circuit 111 of the remote controller control section 11 determines which audio/video devices are connected to the master controller, and corresponding identification data are stored in a memory 113 of the remote controller control section 11 (c.f. page 9, lines 7 to 12). Thereafter, the audio/video (source) device identification data are transferred to the remote controller 9 (c.f. page 9, lines 19 to 24). Thereupon, the program checks and confirms that command data for the audio/video source devices identified by the identification data exist in a command memory 95A of the remote controller 9 (c.f. page 10, lines 12 to 16).

Presuming that command data for all audio/video source devices connected to the master controller are already stored in the remote controller, then the names of the corresponding audio/video source devices are displayed on a display panel 96 of the remote controller 9 as shown in Figure 8 (c.f. page 11, line 4 to line 24, in particular lines 22 to 24).

Thus, upon a turn-on command generated by actuating a power-on switch, an initialization or setting-up procedure is initiated that comprises the steps of determining the available audio/video source devices, storing corresponding identification codes in a master controller, transmitting the codes to a remote controller, determining in the remote controller whether or not command data are stored for all available audio/video source devices and displaying the names of the available audio/video source devices.

Consequently, upon completion of the initialization or switching-on procedure, the known Osawa system is ready to be controlled by a user.

Contrary to the Examiner's opinion, this switching on or setting up procedure that is initialized by actuating a power-on switch cannot be compared with interpreting control information input in accordance with available application devices.

Further, upon setting up the known audio/video system and presenting a menu to the user on the display of the remote controller as shown in Figure 8 of Osawa et al., the user can select one of the available devices by inputting a corresponding device selection command by touching the touch screen.

Upon input of the selection command, the available control commands for the selected device are presented to the user as shown in Figure 9, so that the user can control a selected audio/video source device, e.g. a CD player in a usual way as shown in Figure 9.

Thus, in Osawa, each command input by the user has a very specific predetermined meaning, so that no interpretation by the system is necessary.

3. To illustrate the difference between the present invention and the teaching of Osawa more clearly, let us assume that a user wishes to listen to a certain radio station, e. g. to "AFN".

To cause the known system (such as that of Osawa) to present the AFN program, the user needs to perform the following control steps:

- At first, the user has to turn on the system (if necessary) and has to wait for the completion of the setting-up procedure, i.e. for the presentation of the available audio/video source devices of the system as shown in Figure 8 (if necessary).
- Then the user has to select the tuner as the desired audio/video source device.
- When the different possible control commands for the tuner are presented to the user, then the user has to touch a radio station selection field of the touch screen for directly inputting a command for selecting the desired radio station, i.e. AFN.

This is the usual way for operating any radio apparatus with the only difference being that the radio apparatus has to be selected prior to the selection of the radio station from a plurality of available audio/video source devices.

However, the methodology of the present invention differs from the foregoing practice of the prior art. The user of the present method inputs only the name of a radio station, and all other control steps are done by the system in accordance with the invention.

4. In view of the above discussion, it is believed that the present invention is neither anticipated nor suggested by Osawa considered alone or in combination with the teachings of other cited prior art, particularly Darbee who is concerned with a program guide on a remote control display that uses a well-known predetermined menu structure.

The amendment to claim 1 emphasizes the differences between the present invention and the cited art, and finds support in the specification, in particular page 2 at lines 24-36, and also on page 7 at lines 19-23.

As a further ground of distinction between the present invention and the teachings of Osawa, it is noted that present figure 3 deals with the issue as to whether instruction interpretation is unambiguous, and questions the user for further data if required. Such situations are disclosed in the present specification on page 8.

The matter of the unambiguous instruction interpretation does not appear in any of the figures of Osawa. This matter does not

appear in Osawa because Osawa (page 2) discloses operation of a remote controller, suitable for an audiovisual system of several devices, wherein the operation is in hierarchical format, and enables the user to select one of a plurality of displayed devices (page 3 at line 5).

The matter of the unambiguous instruction interpretation is dealt with by amended claim 1, which states the method step wherein the claim recites that the control information input is interpreted in accordance with available application devices by checking whether the control information is known, unambiguous and complete. Thereby, claim 1 recites subject matter that is not dealt with by the cited art and, thereby, is distinguishable over the teachings of the cited art. The dependent claims 2-9 include the subject matter of claim 1 and recite further features which distinguish over the cited art.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

A check in the amount of \$420.00 is enclosed for a 2 month extension of time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,

Geza C. Ziegler, Jr.

Geza C. Ziegler, Jr.

Reg. No. 44,004

24 August 2004

Date

Perman & Green, LLP
425 Post Road
Fairfield, CT 06824
(203) 259-1800
Customer No.: 2512

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